

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 CAB-02 COME-00 DOTE-00
CIEP-01 FAA-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 IO-13 /076 W
----- 047576 /44

O 171815Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8098

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAIR, FR
SUBJECT: CIVAIR: ALLEGED REBATING BY PAKISTAN INTER-
NATIONAL AIRLINES

REF: PARIS 37332; MILLER-RIMAS TELCON DEC. 17

1. THERE HAS BEEN LAST-MINUTE DEVELOPMENT RE PIA TEST
TICKET OPERATION SUGGESTING THAT IF THERE HAS NOT BEEN A
LEAK SOMEWHERE THEN WE ARE FACED WITH AN ENORMOUS COIN-
CIDENCE. CAA RECEIVED LATE AFTERNOON DEC. 17 TELEX FROM
RONALD RICHARDS, WHO GAVE AS ADDRESS IUS, 15 RUE DU FAU-
BOURG MONTMARTRE, PARIS 9. THIS IS SAME LAST NAME OF
PERSON FROM THAT ORGANIZATION (IUS) AT THAT ADDRESS WHO
SOLD DISCOUNTED TICKET ON WHICH MERY PROPOSES TRAVEL TO
NEW YORK VIA PIA ON DEC. 18. (REFTEL).

2. TELEX, RECEIVED AT EMBASSY AT 4:40 PM, IS IN ENGLISH
AND READS AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE ATT: MR. W. MILLER, CAB (SIC)
PARIS. REPEAT OF MESSAGE SENT TO CAB WSH AT 14:45.. NO
ANSWER AS YET...PLEASE TAKE NOTE FOR FURTHER REFERENCE
THAT AS AN AMERICAN CITIZEN, I HAVE REQUESTED CAB IM-
MEDIATE ACTION. THANK YOU. RESPECTFULLY YOURS. RONALD
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RICHARDSUNQUOTE. SECOND PART OF SAME TELEX QUOTES
WHAT IS PURPORTED TO BE TEXT OF TEL RICHARDS SENT CAB AS
FOLLOWS: QUOTE CABAIR WSH
IUS 660159F PARIS DEC. 17, 1976. EXTREME URGENT (SIC).
GOOD DAY GENTLEMEN,
HAS MR. P. GIRAUDET OR MR. P. SAUTET FROM AIR FRANCE

CONTACTED YOU REGARDING SOME TEST-TICKETS ON PARIS-NEW-YORK THAT WE REQUESTED FOR TOMORROW?

IF NOT, PLEASE CONTACT THEM AT ONCE, AND IF IT REMAINS NEGATIVE, PLEASE REVERT TO US AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND WE SHALL MAKE THE SAME REQUEST DIRECTLY TO YOU.

MR. WILLIAM MILLER FROM YOUR PARIS OFFICE MAY VISIT US AT ONCE AT 15 FAUBOURG MONTMARTRE PARIS 9. IT IS EXTREMELY URGENT AS IT IS ALREADY 14:30 PARIS TIME AND MR. MILLER WILL BE OFF ALL OF NEXT WEEK. BEST REGARDS. AMEMBASSY A 65022 IF, AIRFRANS PARIS, CABAIR WSH, IUS 660159F. UNQUOTE TELEX THEN CONCLUDES WITH THIRD SECTION AS FOLLOWS, OBVIOUSLY DIRECTED TO EMBASSY: QUOTE AS YOU MAY NOTICE, THE SAME WAS ALSO SENT TO AIR FRANCE...AND ALSO TO IATA AT TLX 2339L IN COINTRIN. VERY TRULY YOURS, R. RICHARDS. UNQUOTE

3. P. GIRAUDET REFERRED TO IN TEXT OF TELEX IS CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF AIR FRANCE. SAUTET IS ONE OF TOP OFFICIALS ON COMMERCIAL STAFF AT AIR FRANCE.

4. BACKGROUND TO ABOVE TELEX WAS MYSTERIOUS PHONE CALL WHICH CAA RECEIVED DEC. 16 FROM PERSON WHO SAID HE WAS FRENCH/AMERICAN DUAL NATIONAL WHO HAD BEEN IN "CHARTER" BUSINESS IN PARIS FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS BUT REFUSED GIVE HIS NAME. SAID HE WAS CALLING EMBASSY TO LEARN TELEX NUMBERS OF CAB AND IATA SO THAT HE COULD BRING CERTAIN MALPRACTICES TO THEIR ATTENTION. HE SAID THAT THESE MALPRACTICES CONSISTED OF TICKET REBATES. HE SAID THIS WAS CUTTHROAT BUSINESS IN WHICH HIS "LIFE WOULD BE IN DANGER" IF IT WAS LEARNED THAT HE WAS APPROACHING THE AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL USE

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RITIES. HE SAID THIS WAS WHY HE WOULD NOT IDENTIFY HIMSELF "UNTIL LATER TIME". DURING RAMBLING CONVERSATION HE CLAIMED PARIS-BASED IATA REP PIERQUET WAS IN CONNIVANCE WITH AIR FRANCE AND HE IMPLIED THAT IT WAS AIR FRANCE THAT WAS GUILTY OF MALPRACTICES WHICH HAD TO BE UNCOVERED SOON, HE SAID, BECAUSE EVIDENCE WAS AVAILABLE FROM A NUMBER OF FLIGHTS SCHEDULED OVER THE HOLIDAY SEASON. HE INQUIRED ABOUT USG REGULATIONS CONCERNING TICKET REBATING, WHETHER USG HAD POWER TO PUNISH FOREIGN AS WELL AS US CARRIERS SERVING US, AND ALSO WHETHER CAB WOULD PURCHASE TEST TICKETS. CAA INDICATED WHAT US REGULATIONS WERE BUT SAID THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO DEFER TO CAB FOR DETAILS OF ANY ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS AND TEST TICKET PURCHASING. CALLER SAID HE MIGHT WISH SEE CAA SOON TO DISCUSS QUESTION FURTHER. CAA SAID THIS WOULD HAVE TO TAKE PLACE BY FOLLOWING DAY (DEC. 17) SINCE HE WOULD BE ON LEAVE ALL NEXT WEEK. CALLER SAID HE WOULD SEND TELEX IMMEDIATELY TO CAB AND IATA WITH COPY TO EMBASSY ON

WHICH HE WOULD, HOWEVER, PREFER CAA WOULD TAKE NO ACTION

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AT THIS TIME. CAA RESPONDED THAT WHETHER HE TOOK ACTION
ON INFO COMING TO HIS ATTENTION WAS MATTER FOR HIS SOLE
APPRECIATION.

5. WHEN TELEX WAS NOT RECEIVED LATER THAT DAY, CAA WAS
ALL THE MORE DISPOSED TO DISMISS PHONE CALL AS COINCI-
DENCE AND UNRELATED TO PIA TEST TICKET OPERATION. AS
RESULT, HE DID NOT MENTION CALL TO COMMEAU OF PANAM AT
DEC.17 MEETING WITH MERY AT EMBASSY IN ORDER NOT RISK
UNNECESSARILY ALARMING MERY. SUBSEQUENT TO RECEIPT OF
TELEX CAA IMMEDIATELY APPRISED COMMEAU OF TEXT AND ALSO
BRIEFED HIM ON ANONYMOUS PHONE CALL OF THE PREVIOUS DAY.
COMMEAU WONDERED WHETHER INSTEAD THIS MIGHT BE RELATED
TO WHAT HE UNDERSTOOD HAD BEEN STRENUOUS EFFORTS
BY AIR FRANCE IN PAST FEW DAYS TO WIN IATA APPROVAL FOR
PART CHARTER FARE (FORTY PASSENGER GROUPS), WHICH AIR
FRANCE AND CERTAIN TOUR OPERATORS, INCLUDING PERHAPS
IUS, MIGHT HAVE QUIETLY BEGUN TO MARKET IN EXPECTATION OF
APPROVAL. CAA DID NOT FIND THIS EXPLANATION VERY PER-
SUASIVE. IT LOOKED TO HIM RATHER IF TELEX WAS FRANTIC
EFFORT BY IUS TO CONVINCE ALL CONCERNED--EMBASSY, CAB,
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AIR FRANCE, AND EVEN IATA--THAT IUS DID NOT CONDONE MAL-PRACTICES AND WAS CALLING ATTENTION TO THEM, ALBEIT IN VERY ELLIPTICAL AND NOT VERY COHERENT OR PRECISE FASHION. OSTENSIBLE QUERY TO AIR FRANCE RE TEST TICKET FOR USE DEC. 18, AND EVEN IMPLICATION IN TEXT OF TELEX THAT TEST TICKETS HAD BEEN BOUGHT FROM OR THROUGH AIR FRANCE AT ISU "REQUEST", MIGHT MAKE AIR FRANCE DOUBLY ALERT TO ACCEPT-ANCE ANY SUSPECT TICKETS AT ITS CHECK-IN COUNTERS FOR DEC. 18 DEPARTURES TO NEW YORK. (FACT THAT MERY TICKET SHOWS LONDON ISSUANCE BUT IS DENOMINATED IN FRENCH FRANCS (SEE REFTTEL) IS INCONSISTENCY THAT COULD BE CAUGHT BY SHARP-EYED COUNTER CLERK AT CHECK-IN. WHEN WE MENTIONED THIS TO COMMEAU AT MORNING SESSION, HE HAD DIS-COUNTED LIKELIHOOD THAT BUSY CHECK-IN CLERK WOULD EVEN BOTHER SCRUTINIZING ISSUANCE STAMPS. MOREOVER, THIS WOULD NOT BE FIRST TICKET ISSUED IN THIS MANNER THAT HAS BEEN HONORED FOR DEPARTURE ON PIA FLIGHTS.) HOWEVER, THOUGH IT REQUIRED SOME STRETCH OF THE IMAGINATION, PERHAPS IT WAS ALL COINCIDENCE.

6. COMMEAU ACCORDINGLY AGREED WITH CAA THAT WE SHOULD KEEP OUR FINGERS CROSSED AND LET MERY REPORT TO AIRPORT AS PLANNED FOR DEC. 18 DEPARTURE ON PIA FLIGHT.
RUSH

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